

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY



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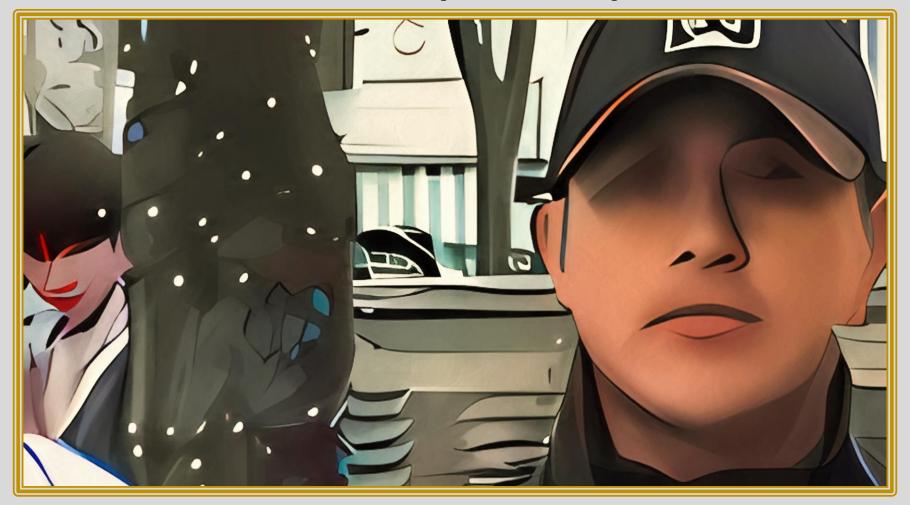
The first rays of daylight pierced through the windows, rousing me from my slumber in the backseat of our battered vehicle.

Recalling the conversation I had with the enigmatic Bubba, a man of spiritual wisdom, it became apparent that our meager finances were slipping away, much like the days slipping away from the calendar.

As we embarked on our journey, our minds were not filled with clarity, but rather clouded with lingering thoughts from the previous night's revelations.

Despite the uncertainty that loomed over us, we

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

steered the vehicle towards the west, ready to confront whatever destiny had in store for us.

The weight of the past weighed heavily on our shoulders, yet we were determined to forge ahead and embrace the challenges that lay ahead.

The road ahead may have been unknown, but we resolved to face it head-on remained unwavering. The winding road descended gracefully from the fog-covered mountains, creating a mesmerizing cascade of

asphalt that eventually led us to a vast basin nestled within a different valley.

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This picturesque landscape was home to the majestic Ping River, which flowed gracefully through the valley, adding a touch of serenity to the already breathtaking scenery.

As the wise man Bubba once said, the valley boasted more shades of green than one could possibly imagine, likening it to the hues found in an "Irish Spring" soap bar. The comparison was not only vivid but also poetic, painting a picture of the valley that was as vibrant as it was serene.

If you're not too familiar with American consumer

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

goods, let me introduce you to the Irish Spring soap bar. This product was specifically created to cater to immigrants who had settled in America but were still longing for the comforts of their homeland.

Legend has it that this particular soap bar possesses mystical abilities to evoke vivid memories of a distant, forgotten realm, transporting individuals back in time with its enchanting fragrance.

Strangely enough, it also seems to ignite a peculiar urge within people to adorn everything in sight with a vibrant shade of green, from their surroundings to

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

even their beverages, as if under a whimsical spell that cannot be easily shaken off.

I have yet to lay eyes on a soap bar as potent as the one I am about to describe, but the stories I have heard are truly captivating. Rumor has it that anyone who has ever used this soap bar has transformed into an Irish hero, and numerous peculiar occurrences and extraordinary feats have been attributed to its mystical powers.

Bubba, the wise and revered individual, has enlightened me about the enchanting abilities

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

possessed by the color green. It is truly remarkable how even the faintest shade of green can evoke a profound collective recollection of a thousand years of anguish endured by their community. Undoubtedly, this serves as a clear indication of why one can still discern the resonant and forceful cries emanating from the sealed entrances of authentic Irish taverns. The robust and spirited atmosphere within these establishments seems to transcend physical barriers, allowing the passionate voices of patrons to echo through the very walls of the car.

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It's no surprise that Irish songs often carry a tinge of melancholy, considering the copious amounts of emerald-hued beer that flow through the veins of those who embrace what researchers have dubbed the blarney syndrome. As I delved into various research papers on the subject, I couldn't help but notice the correlation between this syndrome and the sorrowful tunes that resonate from the Emerald Isle. The infusion of green beer seems to evoke a sense of wistfulness, lending a touch of sadness to the melodies that have become synonymous with music.

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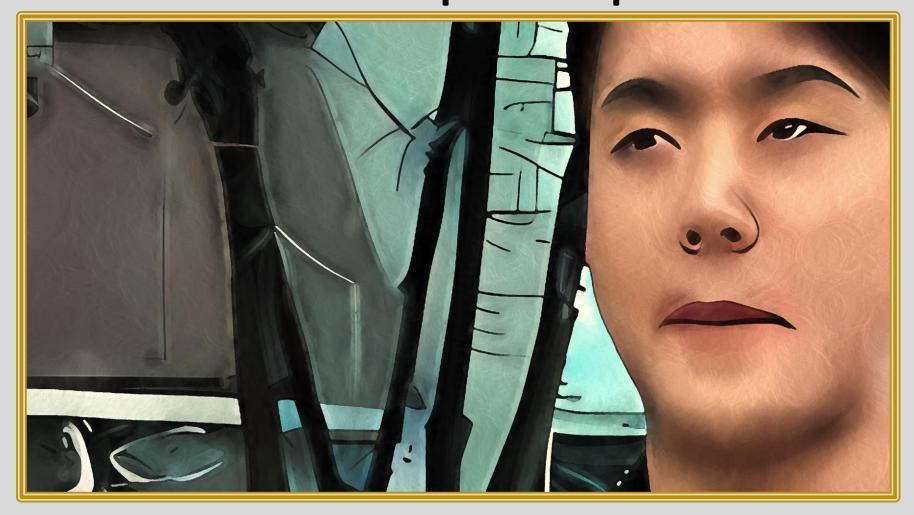


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Throughout my formative years, I held the belief that these cries emanated from a clandestine game of human darts, exclusively played once the non-Irish individuals had departed. This notion captivated my imagination, as I envisioned a hidden world where the Irish community engaged in a thrilling and mysterious activity, concealed from the prying eyes of outsiders. The echoes of these cries fueled my curiosity, leaving me yearning to uncover the truth behind this enigmatic game.

When I was just a young child, a knowledgeable man

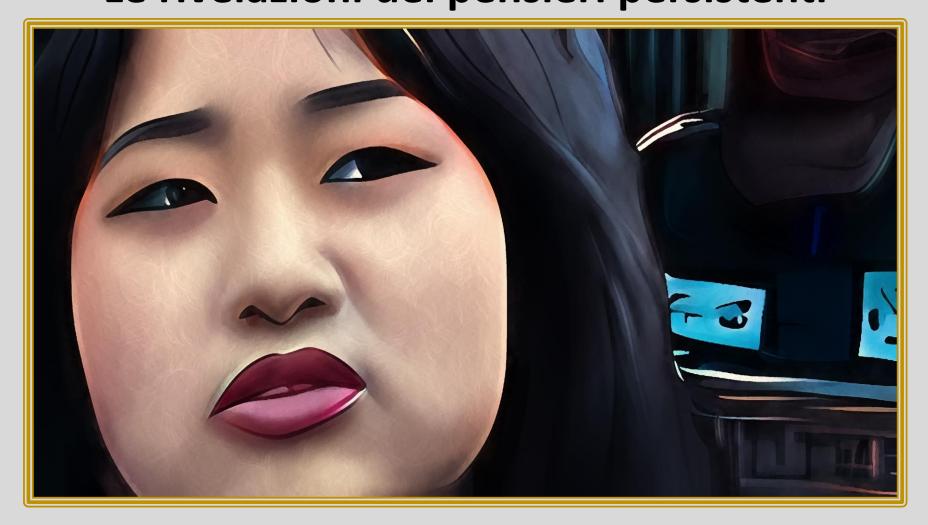
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arrived in my humble village to settle down after spending numerous years laboring in the Raj. He regaled us with tales of taverns where green beer flowed freely and spoke of a people who shared our deep-seated animosity towards our English Overlords. The memory of that moment is etched in my mind, vivid and unforgettable. It was as if time stood still when he regaled us with a peculiar tale, one that spoke of Irish warriors and their mischievous ways. With utmost clarity, I recall him describing how these warriors would cunningly ensnare an unsuspecting

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

English gentleman, lured by the camaraderie of a night filled with merriment and drinks.

Little did the Englishman know that he would become the centerpiece of a clandestine game of darts, whisked away to the hidden recesses of an Irish pub, where his fate would be determined by the precision of their aim.

The elderly gentleman informed us that they planned to continue playing well into the early hours of the following morning, at which point they intended to discard the forsaken English master out onto the

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

streets to be collected along with the morning garbage. With a deep affection for the Irish, the elderly gentleman spared no effort in enlightening us about the remarkable connections we shared with these individuals whose native land lay beyond the horizon. He passionately conveyed stories and anecdotes, weaving a tapestry of our shared heritage and the enduring spirit that bound us together, even though our paths had never crossed before. His enthusiasm was infectious, and through his words, he transported us to a world where cultural

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



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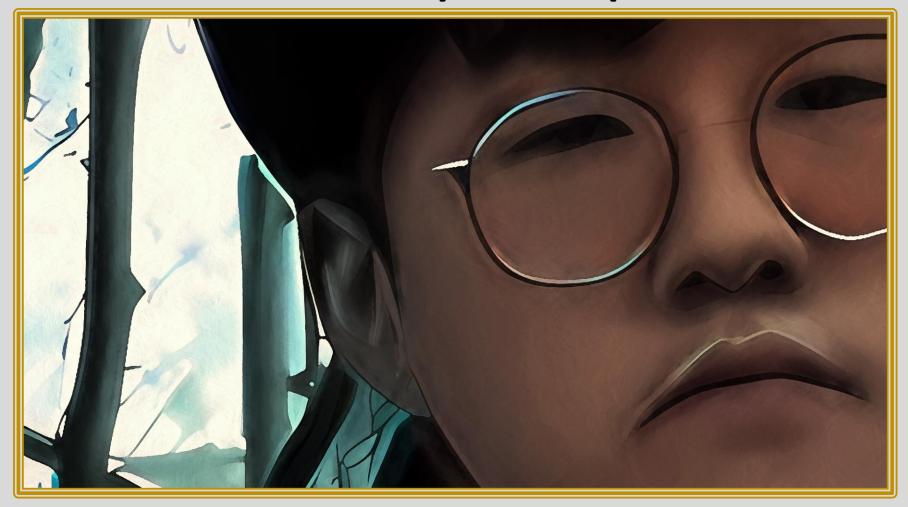
boundaries dissolved, and a sense of kinship with these Irish Folks prevailed.

He went to great lengths to educate us on the fact that we were merely pawns to our English rulers, emphasizing the importance of respecting and emulating the courageous actions of the Irishmen in our own struggle for independence.

Back in my childhood days, the true meaning behind this phrase eluded me. Nevertheless, I must confess that I was not the most well-mannered student when it came to our English school master. I would often

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



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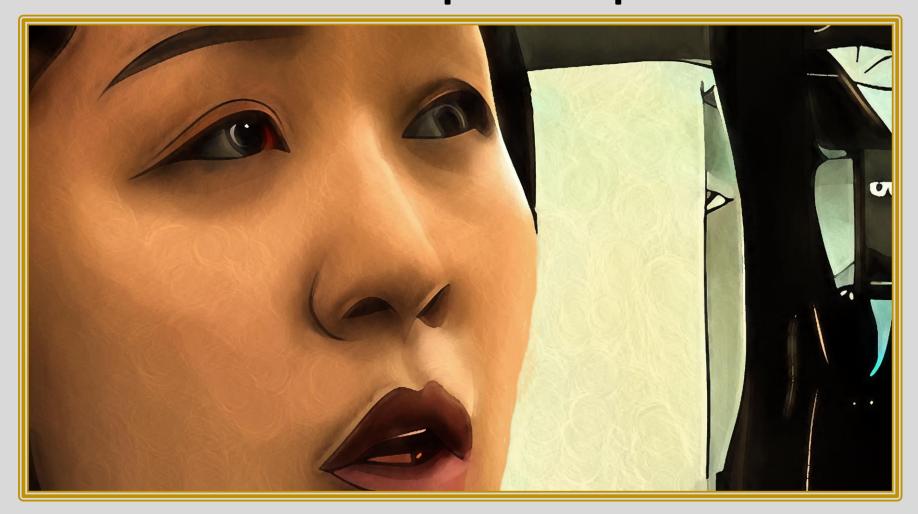
Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

find myself humming the delightful Irish tunes that the old man had taken the time to teach us after our regular classes.

After school, like clockwork, we would eagerly make our way to the old man's house, knowing that he would regale us with his captivating tales.

These stories were filled with the enchanting allure of fairies, their seductive cries beckoning us to join them on wild and exhilarating adventures. It was as if we were transported into the wildest dreams of an Irishman, consumed by a fervent desire for love and

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

thrilling escapades.

I have come to a realization that the elderly gentleman manipulated the conclusion of every tale, altering them in order to shield us from the harsh reality that the protagonists were destined to face heartbreak and misery, with their beloved soulmates arrogantly demanding to be taken to the shopping center by their sugar daddies.

My perspective on the old man's numerous stories has now become more balanced. I find it hard to believe that those clever Irish individuals would simply

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abandon that unfortunate English fellow on the street with a wallet full of money.

Memories of the past and the pure happiness of my youth have diverted my attention from our present journey, leading me to ponder the origins of the wornout, yellow lines that have adorned most of the miles we have traveled on this road. It's as if we are driven by a desire, much like the Irish in the old man's tale, to uncover another captivating story or what the Irish themselves refer to as a "fanciful conversation."

My soul, overflowing with emotion, yearned for the

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Holy Elephant to guide me back home.

I pleaded with desperation for the spirits of my ancestors to come and lead me to my eternal rest, where I could find solace and the ultimate peace that I sought.

My voice resonated with fervor as I joined in a harmonious chorus, blending my prayer with a captivating melody that carried a soulful "doo wah diddy" rhythm. If you're familiar with the hymn, feel free to join me in this uplifting song of worship: "Return me to the past, transport me back to a time

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

where I can relive the cherished memories of my youth. Whether it be through the efficient delivery service of UPS or the fast-paced fiber optics of MCI's Friends and Family discount, I long to escape to a simpler life where I can peacefully reminisce and bask in the nostalgia of days gone by..." In that moment, the wise man Bubba rescued my spirit from its dark descent into a vividly somber melancholy that could have impressed the elderly gentleman and perhaps even uplifted the spirits of the legendary Irish Heroes he often spoke of.

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



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Bubba, the wise old man, brought to mind the age-old American belief that those who perish while yearning for a simpler existence are fated to be reincarnated as the demonetized California Raisins.

It makes one wonder, could it be anyone other than the embodiment of evil who brings these haunting nightmares to life?

My mind is haunted by the painful recollections of others' cultural aspirations, but I find solace in my unwavering commitment to honor and the teachings of our revered Holly Elephant.

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It is my duty to banish the audacious spirits that emerge from their desert homelands, the desolate wastelands near a remote corner known as Ogden Utah.

Here lives a clan of defrocked Jesuits belong to a prestigious group within a formidable organization known as the Internal Revenue Service.

For countless years, they have traversed the vast territories of America, seeking out vulnerable individuals in pursuit of their financial resources. According to the revered figure Bubba, they have even

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GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

targeted his dwindling funds.

Once more, I have been fortunate enough to never come across them, however, the malevolent deeds they carry out have instilled fear of their activities across the globe.

Just like the brave souls who stood against the mighty Good King Richard and his loyal warrior, Robin Hood, I envision this malevolent army emerging from their desolate dwellings, ready to unleash chaos upon the prosperous cities of America. Their advance resembles an unstoppable tidal wave of destruction, sweeping

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across the land with the relentless force of a plague of locusts.

Their marketing efforts have inexplicably become linked to the date of April 15th, though the reason behind this association remains a mystery. It is unclear whether this date holds significance as a commemoration of a historic battle or event from the past.

Bubba, the revered man of wisdom, has imparted to me that on the 15th of April, it is the day when citizens across the vast American cities are required to

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

offer tribute to these bandits.

As time went on, I would come across numerous stories from the indigenous people of the desolate lands of Montana about the courageous individuals who defied the annual ransom payment. Intrigued by this remarkable and seemingly unknown chapter in American history, I am eager to delve deeper into the subject and conduct a thorough study. Just like the notorious roaming environmentalist groups of Or-Be-Gone, the IRS Jesuits are known for their swift and ruthless tactics when it comes to

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

dealing with dissenters. In this particular scenario, they mercilessly seize a portion of people's hardearned income, leaving them with only a fraction of what they had earned throughout the year. These IRS Jesuits are relentless in their pursuit and leave no room for disagreement or negotiation. On numerous occasions, I have pondered the idea that formidable factions, like the Army of the Salvationists, might swiftly declare a sacred crusade to push these malevolent beings back into the dark depths of their desolate homeland.

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Surprisingly, it has come to my attention that there are instances of corruption among individuals who were previously believed to be beyond reproach in American society.

It appears that the Salvationists and many prosperous business families in America have managed to avoid paying this annual fee, and there are indications that they have actually received a form of compensation known as a tax credit, in exchange for ignoring the hardships faced by their employees.

These workers are frequently targeted by roaming

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

groups of IRS Jesuits, causing them to suffer greatly while those in power turn a blind eye.

As Bubba made a quick stop in town, he found himself facing the disapproving glares of the grocery clerks. However, he didn't let their unfriendly stares intimidate him. With a strong and confident voice, he addressed them, expressing his desire to go back to a time when men could hold their heads high amidst the powerful gusts of the Northern Winds, without a single tear of sadness in their eyes.

Bubba also didn't shy away from mentioning the

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

peculiar attire of his companion, who lacked the holy underwear of Gandhi, but was still a respected prophet from a distant land.

In a playful manner, Bubba even teased the clerks about their father's late-night fashion choices, hinting at the enduring popularity of leisure suits.

Amidst this banter, Bubba made his purchase of another box of Blitz beer and a generous amount of green food coloring, adding a touch of excitement to his day.

As we took another misstep on the slick sidewalk

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

railing, the overpowering scent of fresh salmon and green beer created a nauseating blend that even our strong stomachs couldn't handle, causing us to start feeling unwell.

Bubba, the wise man of the village, pointed out that the root cause of our sudden weakness in our stomachs was actually the young clerk's negative attitude. He recommended that we should consider revisiting his shop in order to purge ourselves of this newfound ailment.

I fervently requested him to kindly remember the

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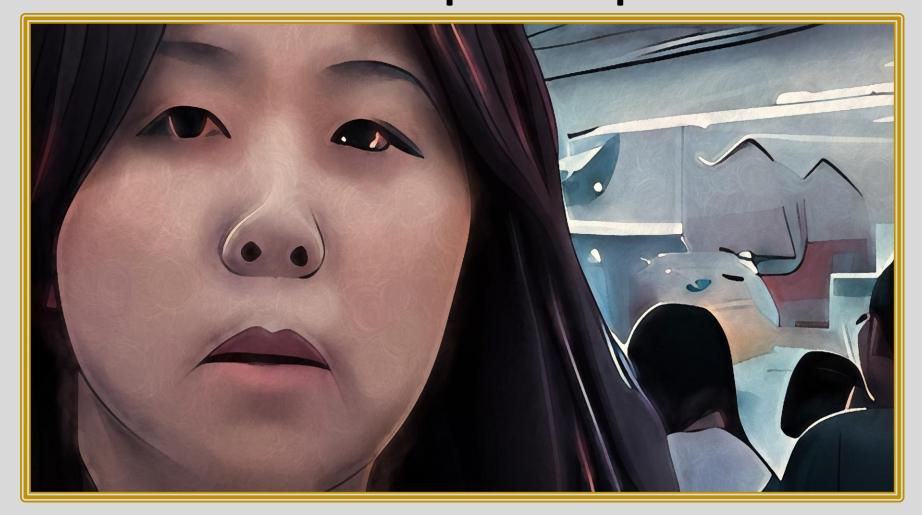
Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

unforgettable journey we embarked upon at the "Market of the K" and advised against tempting our luck in a town that reminded me of the one famously destroyed by the great American hero, Rambo. Bubba, the wise man of the holly, eventually came around to see things my way. He mentioned that the town reminded him of the place where the legendary Native American hero, Billy Jack, once took on a group of cowboys with his impressive kung-fu skills. Interestingly, Bubba humorously referred to the cowboys as having "necks of red." (to be honest, I do

GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY



GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

not know if they suffered from a medical condition that left their necks red or if it was, yet, another form of American Gang symbolism that they painted on themselves as a badge of that gang's membership?) After much persuasion, the esteemed Bubba eventually relented to my requests. I managed to convince him that his kung-fu skills were not quite on par with those of Billy Jack, and that it was no longer feasible for him to journey back to the store. As the acidic raindrops fell from the sky like stinging whips, the holly man Bubba made his way to the

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



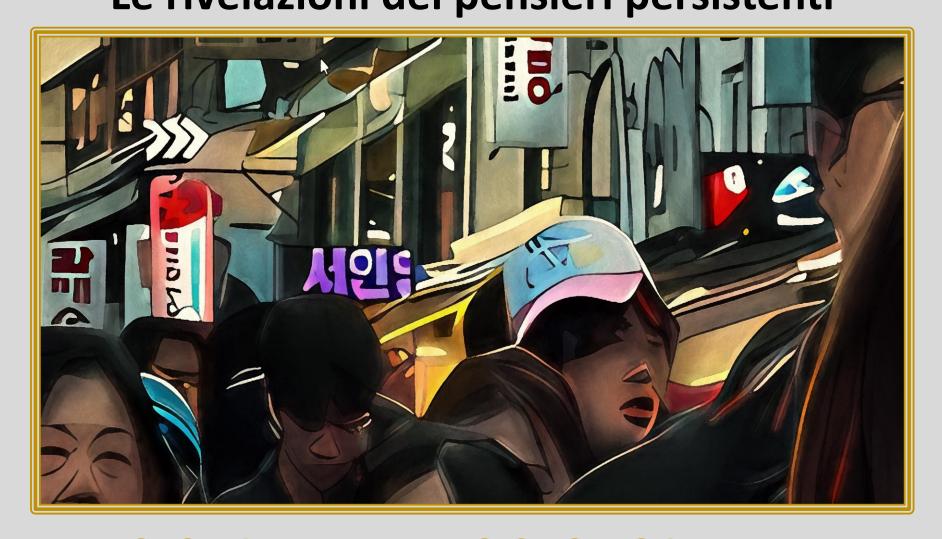
GIOVANNI METRO STOP GALLERY

Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

park's solitary cherry tree to empty his stomach. As the sun began its descent towards the horizon, casting long shadows across the landscape, the impending darkness slowly enveloped us in its embrace. It was at this moment that the holly man Bubba, with a look of discomfort on his face, concluded his bout of vomiting into the branches of a solitary tree standing nearby.

The eerie silence that followed was broken only by the rustling of leaves in the gentle breeze, as Bubba wiped his mouth and took a deep breath.

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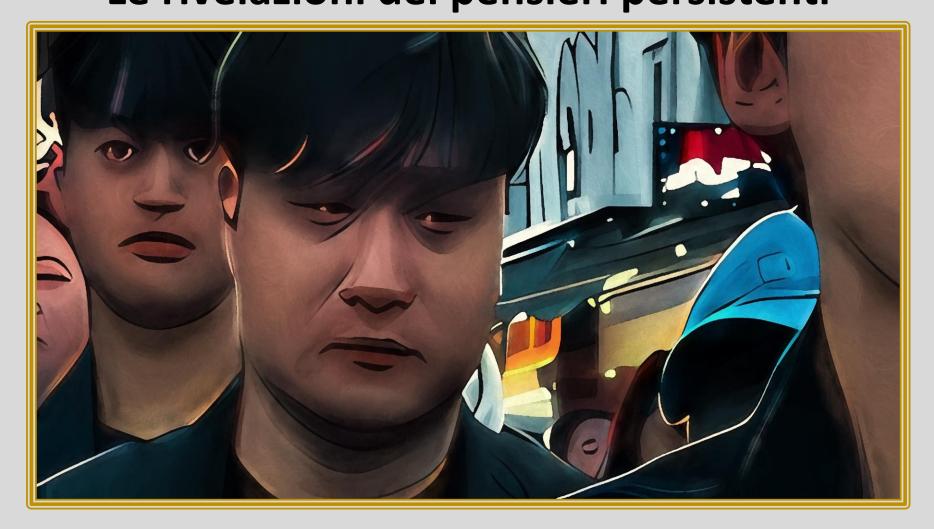
Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti

Regardless of the unsettling nature of the scene, there was a sense of calm that settled over us as the darkness continued to descend, shrouding everything in its inky veil. Bubba, looking slightly pale but composed, turned to us with a faint smile and muttered something about the tree being a receptacle for his troubles.

And with that, we continued on our journey, leaving behind the strange encounter with the holly man and the lonely tree in the gathering night.

Luckily, we saw it finally disappear in the rearview

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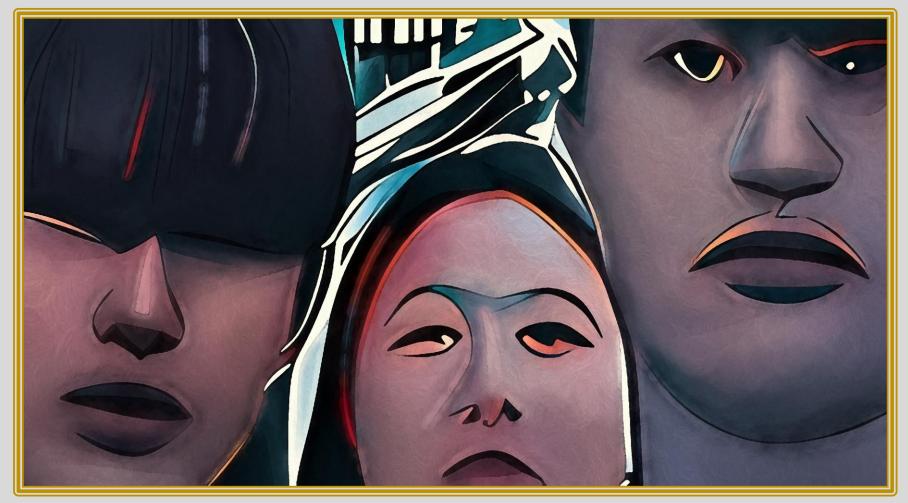


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mirror and we were long gone down the road before a promenade of the swishing fichus of the park's angry fairies could descend down upon us and administer a proper beating for the Holy Man Bubba's dirty deed. As the sun began its descent, the evening stole away the remaining light, leaving behind a sense of mischief and deceit. In this twilight hour, the seductive words of the enchanting women echoed through the air, enticing us with their extravagant promises. They beckoned us to immerse ourselves in Miss Derides' distorted dream, a journey that would

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Le rivelazioni dei pensieri persistenti



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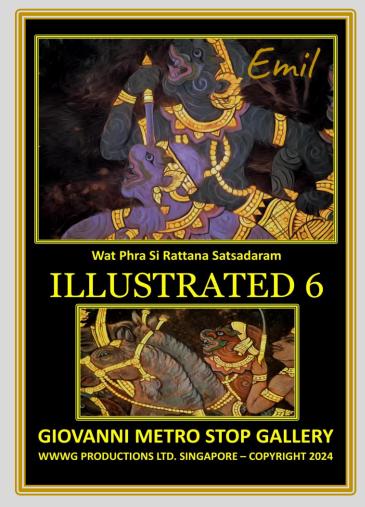
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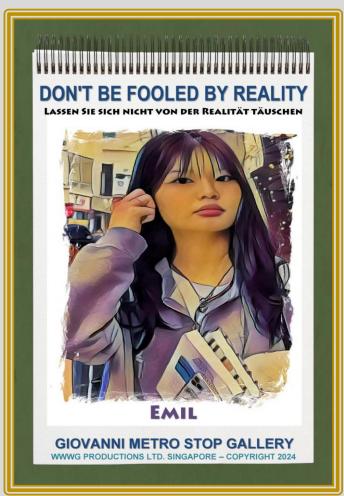
ultimately lead to a climax of pleasure and ecstasy. And so, with a daring spirit, we embarked on this thrilling adventure, ready to succumb to the irresistible allure of the unknown.

As it has done for the past 300 years, the shimmering reflection of a restless machete captivates us before we make our way back to our beaten-up vehicle.

- Emil, 2024

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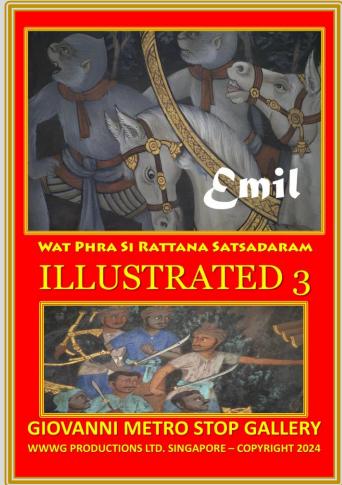






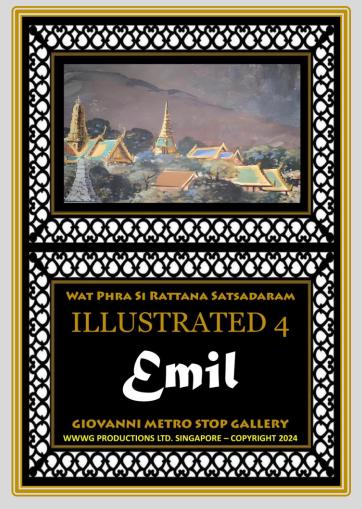
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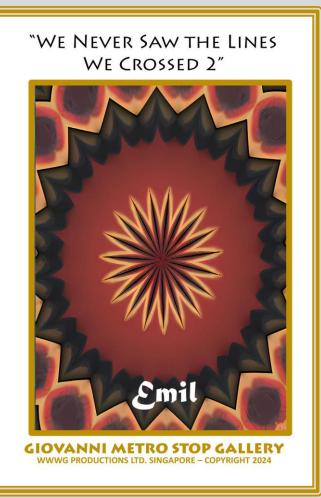






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